



**OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE**

Isiah Leggett  
*County Executive*

Jeremy V. Criss  
*Director*

**MEMORANDUM**

February 16, 2018

**TO:** Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)

**FROM:** Jeremy V. Criss, Director  
Office of Agriculture

**SUBJECT:** February 20, 2018 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday **February 20, 2018 at the Gaithersburg Regional Library 18330 Montgomery Village Ave. Medium Room 3 Gaithersburg, MD 20879 at 7:00 pm.**

The agenda is on the next page.

The draft minutes from the December 19, 2017 AAC meeting are attached.

There was no meeting in January.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Office of Agriculture web site.  
<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/AgServices/agboardscommittee.html>

I hope to see you on Tuesday.

\*Sign language interpreter services will be provided only upon request with notice as far in advance as possible but no less than 72 hours prior to the event. If you need other services or Aids to participate in this activity, please call 301-590-2810

e:aacFebruary(aac18)



**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda  
February 20, 2018**

1. Meeting Called to Order and Introductions.
2. Approval of the December 19, 2017 AAC Meeting Minutes.
3. Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.
4. The OAG received good news from the Office of Human Resources to modify the Business Development Specialist-BDS Job Class Grade 18-27 specific for the Office of Agriculture. Previously, the BDS job class was specific to the Department of Economic Development-DED. When the DED was privatized, the BDS job class was supposed to be terminated. This good news means the three remaining OAG staff positions will be reclassified accordingly with upward mobility-Vacant Farmland Preservation Program Manager, James Harne and Shelly Ingram. The OAG has already remitted the waiver from the County hiring freeze so we can fill the Vacant Farmland Preservation Program Manager. Once these three positions are reclassified all the OAG staff will be completed with this reclassification process that began in June 2017.
5. The County Council approved ZTA 17-06 Agricultural Zone-TDR Requirements. The ZTA reinstates the 1980-2010 policy that TDRs do not need to be retained for dwellings including Farm Labor Housing Units that remain accessory to the farm.
6. Update on the Zion Road Bridge Replacement all agricultural groups have submitted letters to the County DOT recommending a two-lane bridge. The County DOT must now decide how to proceed.
7. There have been two Agritourism Study Advisory Committee meetings (November 29, 2017 and January 17, 2018). Jane Seigler was chosen to lead the group discussion. The third meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2018. The Maryland Department of Agriculture has submitted an Administration Bill (HB 252 Agritourism) and the Maryland Farm Bureau supports the HB 252. The DPS approved MC to be added to HB1116 allowing agricultural buildings to be used for agritourism.
8. The Office of Agriculture has approved two applicants for deer fencing matching grants. The OAG partnered with the Maryland Agricultural Resource Based Industry Development Corporation MARBIDCO to create a matching grant program for farmers installing deer fencing. There are two more applications pending.
9. The OAG has been working with the County Executive and Council on HB 396 Local Government-Agricultural Land Preservation Fee. This bill was proposed by the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board and not included as part of the MCFB Policy Development recommendations. MFB, the County Executive and the County Council has taken no position on HB 396.

10. Appointments for new members to the Agricultural Advisory Committee.
11. DNR just proposed new hunting and fishing regulations to start with the 2018-19 season. These pose huge problems for deer population management as they reduce our potential to remove deer from Montgomery County neighborhoods.

Change #1

This one is a big problem. It creates an antlerless deer bag limit of 10 deer during the archery season. Last year I took 35 deer, 33 of those antlerless. This would result in a major reduction in the number of deer I could remove. Most members of Animal Connection Deer Management Team took more than 10 deer during the archery season. What we need in Montgomery County is less deer and this does exactly the opposite of this.

Change #2

Further reduces the antlered deer bag limit to 2, half of what is allowable now.

Change #3

Adds Sunday hunts in September and January (archery season). This is good in general but does no good at all for hunters who have already reached their 10 deer limit in archery season.

The announcement can be found at:

<http://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2018/02/14/public-input-sought-for-hunting-and-trapping-season-proposals/>

with the full text at:

[http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018-2020\\_ProposedSeasons.pdf](http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Documents/2018-2020_ProposedSeasons.pdf)

12. Promotion of Gleaning food to be donated to people in need with the benefits of the Tax Credit for donating food. <http://news.maryland.gov/mda/press-release/2017/09/11/food-donation-tax-credit-pilot-program-now-in-effect-southern-maryland-farmers-eligible-for-up-to-5000-state-tax-credit/>
13. The OAG was required to propose reductions in General Funding to address the revenue short fall of the County. The Office of Agriculture has been in existence for 18 months and on the **attached chart summarizes** of the reductions and the sources of funding for the OAG.
14. The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is March 20, 2018 at 7:00 pm. We will be meeting at the Germantown Library 19840 Century Blvd. Germantown, MD 20874 in room A.

**Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-February 20, 2018 @ 7:00pm

*Gaithersburg Regional Library 18330 Montgomery Village Ave. Medium Room 3  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879.*

Agritourism Advisory Committee-February 21, 2018 @ 6:00pm

Annual Farmers Market Training-February 23, 2018 @ 10:00am

Winter Agronomy Update-February 28, 2018-Urbana Fire Hall

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Supervisors-March 6, 2018@7:00pm

Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-March 9, 2018@9:00

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-March 13, 2018 @7:00pm